INTERNSHIP FOR PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE IN ILLINOIS

BY

LLOYD JAMES PHIPPS

B.S., University of Illinois, 1940
M.S., University of Illinois, 1942
Ed.M., University of Illinois, 1947

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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The dissatisfaction of graduate students with the present program offered them, the dissatisfaction of beginning teachers in the adequacy of their preservice training, and the dissatisfaction of student teachers in the adequacy of their participatory experiences led to an investigation of ways and means of providing the type of program being demanded. A survey of the literature of teacher education indicated that internship was prized highly as a means of functionalizing instruction in education, as a means of integrating theory and practice, and as a means of providing participatory experiences under guidance and supervision.

Because most of the experiences with internship have been concerned with training teachers other than teachers of vocational agriculture and because there are many unanswered problems concerning internship, it was decided that an investigation of internship as it applied to the training of teachers of vocational agriculture in Illinois would be undertaken.

The purposes of the investigation were to

1. ascertain the experiences an intern should obtain during internship and the approximate duration of these experiences,
2. discover the value and limitations of internship in the training of prospective teachers of vocational agriculture,
3. develop an organizational and administrative arrangement for internship.

Internship is defined to mean a definite procedure for introducing a beginning teacher into teaching under the direction and guidance of a local, master teacher and a staff member from a teacher-training institution. An intern is

employed for a salary in a school off-campus. He is a member of the school's instructional staff with definite, assigned teaching responsibilities lighter than those of a full-time teacher so that time will be available to him for the study and analysis of his duties. Graduate credit is allowed an intern by a teacher-training institution for a program of study which is integrated with his part-time teaching responsibilities. On-the-job instruction is provided by a local cooperating teacher and by a supervisor from the teacher-training institution.

Procedures

Several procedures were used to obtain the evidence which would assist in accomplishing the purposes of the study. An "on-the-spot" study was made of California's training program for teachers of vocational agriculture, the only training program in the United States employing internship at the graduate level as a means of training. From the information obtained in California and from the literature, a pilot internship program was organized and established. The pilot program was studied intensively for a year.

Since the results of the present student-teaching program would affect the type of internship which would need to be offered, the present student-teaching program was studied in detail. The difficulties and inadequacies of beginning teachers were studied for the same reason.

A survey was made of the institutions which were training teachers of vocational agriculture in the United States, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico to discover the types of training which they were providing and to discover if they were planning or considering an internship program. A follow-up survey was made of the institutions who were using internship or were using a student-teaching period of twelve weeks or more in length.

The concepts developed from the study of the literature, the pilot-internship program, the present student-teaching program, and the programs for training teachers of vocational

agriculture in other colleges and universities were assembled and submitted to forty-four authorities in the field of teacher education for their reactions.

Summary Of Undergraduate Program For Training Teachers Of Vocational Agriculture

The study showed that prospective teachers of vocational agriculture in Illinois are completing their undergraduate training without self-confidence, ability, and understanding in certain areas of technical agriculture. In agricultural economics, the more serious deficiencies occurred in the knowledge of agricultural law, agricultural finance, and rural sociology. In animal science the greatest deficiencies were in the beginning teachers' abilities to perform the necessary skills. Abilities and knowledge concerning bees, horses, and sheep were not present to any large extent. In farm mechanics, prospective teachers lacked skill as well as knowledge. Lack of skill and knowledge in farm mechanics was greater than in any of the other content fields in agriculture. The greatest deficiencies occurred in the ability to maintain and repair farm machinery and in the abilities connected with farm buildings and carpentry. Under the general heading of soils and crops, the greatest lack of ability concerned fruit production, vegetable production, landscape gardening, forestry, and the manipulative skills connected with soils and crops.

The study showed that the most serious deficiencies and the activities with which the beginning teachers were most concerned were in the professional field. The study also showed that participatory experiences in professional activities greatly increased confidence. Training in classroom teaching was more general and of better quality than the training in other professional areas. However, recognized problems and opinions of teachers at the end of their first year of teaching indicated that the preservice training concerning classroom teaching was inadequate.

The data show that an effort needs to be made to provide a larger number of student teachers with participatory experiences in young-farmer and older-adult education.

Student teachers did not receive sufficient training in guidance and counseling; therefore, as beginning teachers, they limited their efforts in these activities. The level of participation of student teachers and the amount of their participation in visiting and supervising the farming programs of high school pupils were inadequate. Their participatory experiences in Future Farmers of America activities and their instruction in farm mechanics were often inadequate.

Although the participatory experiences with the activities in the area concerning the annual and long-time program were superior to the training received in other activities, they were considered inadequate by beginning teachers. Participatory experiences in the area of instructional facilities and materials were poor in both quantity and quality, and the beginning teachers experienced considerable difficulty in this area during the early part of their first year of teaching. Participatory experiences in the area of records, reports, and administration were relatively good in both quantity and quality, and the study indicated that this phase of the preservice training was adequate.

The confidence of prospective teachers was relatively high, and the participatory experiences were relatively good in the area of school, community, and professional duties. The study indicated that the preservice training in this area was adequate.

No major difficulties were encountered by beginning teachers in the area of visual aids.

Summary Regarding Internship

Internship, which provides for an integration of theory and practice, is one of the oldest forms of organized education; and it is being recognized as an essential part of the training

in more and more professions and semi-professions.

Internship was considered before World War II as a very important part of teacher education in some of the European countries, and its use in the United States as a means of training teachers was growing in popularity before World War II. Both public schools and teacher-training institutions in the United States have conducted internship programs for teachers. Several doctoral dissertations have advocated internship for teachers and have developed some of the techniques and the principles of operation.

The literature in teacher education lists many advantages of internship. The literature also indicates that the reasons that internship is not used more generally are not that the leaders in education disbelieve in internship, but that procedures of organization have not been developed.

The cadet program in California, which is a form of internship at the graduate level for training teachers of vocational agriculture, has been in successful operation for approximately twenty years. The former cadets and present administrators praise the program highly and believe it is the only way to train teachers of vocational agriculture. As proof of the value of the program, they point to the large percentage of their trainees who go into teaching and the large percentage who are successful teachers. They see no limitations which are inherent in the program or which cannot be overcome.

The teacher-training departments in agricultural education in the United States are seeking opportunities for giving more participatory experiences to their trainees. At present, four institutions training teachers of vocational agriculture are planning to initiate internship programs and twenty-six institutions are studying possibilities of internships or lengthened student-teaching programs.

The institutions with lengthened student-teaching programs are dissatisfied with the training which their programs are offering. One of the reasons is that their students have

only partial responsibility for many activities and experience only a sampling of the total duties of the teacher of vocational agriculture. The teacher trainers who are using lengthened student-teaching programs are more satisfied with their training programs, however, than are the teacher trainers who are using short or part-time, student-teaching programs.

The pilot internship program showed that internship provides a well-rounded experience in the duties of a teacher of vocational agriculture. In the pilot internship program, the training of three interns demonstrated that theory and practice can be integrated without the serious neglect of either, and that the duration of the experience was adequate to develop to a satisfactory degree an intern's proficiency in most activities. The self-confidence as well as the general teaching ability of the three interns was materially increased. The interns did not become over-confident of their abilities and were as equally desirous of further education at the end of the year as they were at the beginning. The interns in the pilot internship program continued to be enthusiastic about the program as a means of training. Newton Community High School, the school serving as the intern center in the pilot internship program, was satisfied with the services which they had received from the interns and desired to employ additional interns for the coming year. No inherent weaknesses were discovered in internship; however, the importance of the local supervisors as the key individuals in a program was confirmed. The providing of the local supervisors with sufficient free time to give adequate supervision is one of the principal problems of internship.

The group of authorities composed of directors of student teaching, teacher trainers in agricultural education, supervisors of agricultural education in state departments of education, and others who have made studies of teacher education reacted quite favorably to the concepts regarding internship for prospective teachers of vocational agriculture which were submitted to them. A majority of the concepts were validated. Following are the concepts whose validation

by the authorities made it possible to propose a detailed plan for internship:

1. An inexperienced graduate who is qualified as a teacher of vocational agriculture and who has had eighteen hours of professional education including six weeks of full-time student teaching should not be considered fully trained.
2. A graduate who wishes to work toward an advanced degree immediately after receiving his bachelor's degree should be given the opportunity through some program of internship.
3. An internship program should be conducted in cooperation with a public school.
4. An internship program should provide a trainee with both educational theory and practice and strive for an integration of the two.
5. An internship program and an intern should be supervised by a teacher-training institution.
6. An intern should receive at least one-half of the average salary of an inexperienced teacher of vocational agriculture.
7. Supervision of an intern should be the joint responsibility of the local school serving as an intern center and the teacher-training staff at the university.
8. An intern should engage in all the activities of a teacher of vocational agriculture, but the extent of these activities should be decreased to allow time for his study and analysis of the problems connected with his teaching.
9. Graduate credit should be allowed for internship.
10. An intern's analysis of his experiences and study of the problems connected with his teaching should be considered as partial fulfillment of credit requirements

for an advanced degree.

11. An intern center should have a superior teacher of vocational agriculture who acts as a local supervisor of an intern or interns.

12. An university's teacher-training staff should provide a minimum of two hours of instruction a week.

13. A local supervisor should provide an intern with necessary instruction in the teaching of vocational agriculture.

14. An intern should study his work and anticipate and analyze the problems connected with his teaching.

15. During the year of follow-up, an intern should study intensively those problem areas which the experiences of the previous year have brought to his attention.

Conclusions

Some of the more important conclusions, values, and advantages which were confirmed, developed, or realized more fully as a result of this thesis study are as follows:

1. The work of a modern teacher of vocational agriculture is very complex and requires a long period of participatory experiences to develop necessary abilities and confidence.

2. Many abilities necessary to teaching may be developed if adequate training is provided.

3. A beginning teacher may need time to adjust to his new role, and this adjustment may be facilitated in internship by a reduction of an intern's service responsibilities to the school.

4. Internship may provide an excellent laboratory to train a student in the understanding of children and adults.

5. Internship may provide a laboratory and the time

necessary for a trainee to diagnose and remedy the deficiencies in his own teaching.

6. Internship may provide an excellent opportunity for a trainee to learn the techniques of guidance and counseling.

7. Internship may develop in a trainee the ability to use effective teaching techniques.

8. Internship may provide an opportunity for a trainee to learn many practical agricultural skills and much practical agricultural knowledge.

9. Internship may assist in making the methods, the psychology, and the philosophy of education meaningful to a trainee and stimulate him to apply to his own teaching his knowledge of educational principles.

10. An internship program may assist in improving and extending the program of vocational agriculture in an intern center.

11. An internship program may contribute to the education of the teachers of vocational agriculture at an intern center.

12. Internship may integrate the theoretical and the practical aspects of teaching; therefore, it may motivate an intern's learning of educational principles and techniques.

13. Internship may provide a trainee with an opportunity to become acquainted with and gain ability and confidence in the performance of nearly all the activities of a teacher of vocational agriculture.

14. Internship may help prevent a trainee from acquiring undesirable teaching habits.

15. Internship may provide an opportunity to salvage teachers who lack proficiency in certain few but necessary abilities and give them a chance to correct

their deficiencies.

16. Internship may increase teacher morale.
17. An intern may learn to profit from supervision.
18. Internship may be valuable in developing an intern's ability to recognize problems, to analyze these problems, and to assume responsibility for plans of action.
19. An intern may learn to use democratic principles of action by working and planning with his supervisors, the other teachers in the department, and the other interns.
20. Internship may provide an intern with experiences which many teachers do not experience for years.
21. Internship may provide an intern with excellent training in public relations.
22. Internship may provide an intern with an almost ideal learning situation in adult education.

It is concluded that the difficulties as discovered or more fully realized as a result of the pilot internship program are as follows:

1. determining when an intern is ready to accept new responsibilities and receive additional information,
2. developing an intern's attitude of learning as an essential condition of the internship program,
3. keeping an intern's attention focused on the educational aspects of the program,
4. keeping all parties working together,
5. supplementing a local supervisor's deficiencies without antagonizing him.

An internship program is expensive both of time and money, but so is any graduate program. The expense should not be excessive if the intern centers are clustered and the

work is integrated with other field work of the university's staff in agricultural education.

The experiences with the pilot internship program, the study of the weaknesses of the present teacher-training program in Illinois, and the examination of the experiences in teacher training of other institutions have led to the conclusion that internship for prospective teachers of vocational agriculture should be established on a permanent basis in Illinois.

Since the objectives of the graduate work leading to a Master of Science degree are slightly different from the objectives of internship, it is recommended that internship be a part of a total professional program at the graduate level. It is recommended that a professional degree be granted at the end of the equivalent of one year of full-time graduate work and that the internship portion constitute one-half of the necessary credits for this degree.

An internship program at present should be optional; but if further study proves that it is administratively possible, internship should be required for teachers of vocational agriculture before they are awarded permanent teaching certificates.

VITA

Lloyd James Phipps was born January 9, 1918, near Roberts, Illinois. He received his elementary education in the public schools in Ford County, Illinois, and attended high school at Thawville, Illinois. In 1936 he entered the University of Illinois and was awarded the Bachelor of Science degree in February, 1940. He taught vocational agriculture in the high school at Niantic, Illinois from March, 1940 to August, 1941. He was employed as instructor of vocational agriculture in the University High School, Southern Illinois University from August, 1941 to September, 1945. He was awarded the Master of Science degree from the University of Illinois in 1942. He returned to the University of Illinois in 1945 as an instructor in the Department of Agricultural Education, the position he now holds. Since 1945 he has continued his graduate study and was awarded the Master of Education degree in 1947.

He is the author of "Procedures in Organizing Rural War-Production Training Courses," *Agricultural Education Magazine,* XVI (November, 1943), 93,; *Assigned Home Study and Reports in the Education of Farm Veterans,* Agricultural Education Office, University of Illinois, 1948, 7 pp.; "*Group Instruction on the Farm in the Education of Farm Veterans,*" Agricultural Education Office, University of Illinois, 1948, 8 pp., and in *Agricultural Education Magazine,* XXI (August, 1948), 38-39, 46; with others "Science" in the *Study Guide for Elementary Schools,* Circular Series A. No. 32. Department of Public Instruction, Springfield, Illinois, 1946, 341-473; with Melvin Henderson, "Organizing Farmer-Trainer Meetings," *Illinois Vocational Progress,* IV (February, 1947), 82-83; with G. P. Deyoe, *The Role of the Farmer Trainer in the Education of Farm Veterans,* Agricultural Education Office, University of Illinois, 1948, 8pp; with G. P. Deyoe, "In-Service Meetings for 'G. I.' Agricultural Instructors," *Illinois Vocational Progress,* V (May, 1948), 111-112, 114.